



IRISH 1798 COLLECTION

Postliminious Preface
To the Historical Review
of the
POSTLIMINIOUS PREFACE

TO THE
HISTORICAL REVIEW
of the
STATE OF IRELAND,

By FRANCIS PLOWDEN, Esq.

By Francis Plowden, Esq.
CONTAINING

A STATEMENT OF THE AUTHOR'S COMMUNICATIONS WITH

THE RT. HON. HENRY ADDINGTON,

AND SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES,

UPON THE SUBJECT OF THAT WORK ;

SOME STRICTURES UPON THE FALSITIES OF

The British Critic

AND OTHER ANONYMOUS TRADUCERS OF THE IRISH NATION ;

AND ALSO SOME OBSERVATIONS ON

LORD REDESDALE'S LETTERS TO THE
EARL OF FINGALL.

—o*o—
Quem mala stultitia et quæcunque inscitia veri
Cæcum agit. Hor. Sat. iii. l. 2.

Whom wicked folly and in ev'ry form
Nescience of truth hurl blindfold on to ruin.

—o*o—
Second Edition.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED BY H. FITZPATRICK, 4, CAPEL-STREET.

1804.

Rev. Mr Gordon p. 69.

#757
*Quem mala stultitia et quæcunque inscitia veri
Cæcum agit.*

Cape Street



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

A
POSTLIMINIOUS PREFACE

TO THE
HISTORICAL REVIEW
OF THE
STATE OF IRELAND.

THE marvellous fertility of the present æra in extraordinary occurrences will reconcile the reader to the publication of a postliminious preface to a work, that has been upwards of six months before the public. Whilst the great Ruler of the Universe continues to produce the wise ends of his providence over human beings through secondary causes, the reasoning powers, with which he has gifted them, continue to be the ordinary means, by which he enables them to face the circumstances of the day, however awful, pregnant, or unprecedented they be. To every function and department in social life, appropriate duties are affixed, which arise out of, and can only cease in the extinction of social nature itself. If Bolingbroke observed truly, *that the love of history seems inseparable from human nature*, the

historiographer fills no unimportant station in society. His first and last duty is a sacred adherence to truth ; and until it please the Divine Ruler to suspend or alter that system, by which he has hitherto given action and protection to the physical and moral world, profane and irreverend would be the attempt to attain the truth of human events otherwise than by the light and rules of that reason, which for this very end he has indiscriminately infused into every human being.

The author, conscious of his eagerness to investigate, and his stern determination to disclose the truth, did not heretofore feel himself called upon to make any avowal to the public of his intention and endeavours to fulfil this indispensable duty of the historian. The case is now altered ; and he does feel himself called upon to submit to the public several facts, which affect the credit of his History, and which most intimately touch the interests of Ireland, and therefore involve the firmness and prosperity of the British empire.

Consistently with the views, motives, and principles, which led the author to undertake the arduous and important (and to some, invidious) task of bringing down the Irish history to the present day, he cannot pass wholly unnoticed
the

the invectives upon the *Historical Review* in the British Critic for November and December 1803. The work appears to have set afloat all the gall of the reverend writers of that periodical publication. In p. 465, vol. xxii. they assure their readers, that "the publication is considered by a great part of the Irish as a libel upon the loyalty of Ireland: and his (the author's) object in publishing such a work at such a time is best known to himself." It is now become necessary to make that object known also to the public. They add (p. 483), "As this *Historical Review of the State of Ireland* by Mr. Plowden has very imprudently provoked investigation, it is alone answerable for whatever contention may arise from the discussion." Such responsibility is common to all publications; more especially to such as deal in invective. These considerate censors are, doubtless, therefore prepared for similar responsibility. But the influence, under which the British Critic is well known to be directed and circulated, gives no opening to individual controversy or personal reflection.

The author repels with scorn the false charges of writing his History *to serve the interests of a party, and to mislead the people of England*. He avers, that it contains no wilful *historical misrepresentation*; he believes it contains no actual *historical*

cal

cal misrepresentation. It contains no *undeserved panegyric upon any set of individuals* ; it contains some *sensure*, but no *unfounded calumnies against the living and the dead of any sect.* Such general charges can only be met by general denial ; and in support of such denial, beyond the authorities adduced in the *Historical Review* (not to be taken on the credit of the gross mistatements of the *British Critic*), the author forewarns his reader, that the first overflow of their acrimonious humour for the month of November does not contain one specific charge, much less a proof, that the author has falsified one single historical fact.

If from these first workings of the *British Critic* it be allowable to analyze the dose administered (however gilded the pill), it will be found to have been composed of the following ingredients : three-fourths of antipathy against the professors of the Roman Catholic religion, not ineptly termed, *Papophobia* ; and the remaining fourth of a powerful compound of the drug called *Miserinia*, or hatred of the Irish nation ; an equal portion of a higher sublimate of this compound, lately prepared by Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart. and forced by the puffs of the *British Critic* into general circulation amongst their customers ; and a discretionary infusion of the common drug *Doulodynamy*, never known for ages to have failed

in

in producing in the patient a blind unqualified submission even to the most nauseous, painful, and humiliating *recipe* of the physician. Whether the administration of such a pill have been judicious under the existing circumstances, may be doubted by many; that it has operated powerfully, must be allowed by all, who have examined its effects.

Under the operation of this dose, so keenly ferocious are the patients' animosity and hatred to the Irish nation, or to their religion, or to both, that they take offence at what the author has very compendiously inferred from the indefatigable researches and unanswerable disquisitions of the late Charles O'Connor of Ballynagare, the learned and ingenious Vallancey, and several other respectable Irish authors, concerning some facts, which preceded Christianity by nearly one thousand years; others that happened before the Reformation by as long a period; and many that pre-existed by several centuries the invasion of Ireland by Henry II. the epoch, from which the author commences his *Historical Review*. These facts are not *the assertions of Mr. Plowden*, as falsely advanced (p. 471); but the concurrent testimony of the ancient and modern historians of Ireland, backed and illustrated by a body of evidence of moral and even physical certainty,

which

which baffles scepticism. Yet in the face of such incontrovertible proofs, the *British Critic* recommends to his devotees *to rely rather upon the conjectures of DAVID HUME* *. The unsupported audacity

* As the conjectures of Mr. Hume are here brought forward to discredit the very foundation of Irish history, it will not be found invidious in the author to call his reader's attention to that gentleman's claim to historical veracity.—*Amicus Plato : magis amica veritas*. If these theological anathematisers of the *Historical Review* have read the work regularly, they must have seen (p. 114.) what was said by the Rev. Doctor Warner, (a protestant divine, perhaps as well qualified to know, and as well disposed to disclose, the truth of Irish history, as any writer for the *British Critic*), concerning Mr. Hume's historical fidelity to Ireland. "*To such miserable shifts are able men reduced, when they write to please a party, or to support a character without regard to truth.*" While Mr. Hume was writing his History, a certain lord of session supplied him with several original documents concerning Elizabeth's conduct towards Mary Queen of Scots : they tended to render the character of Elizabeth less amiable in the eyes of the English, than it is generally represented. Mr. Hume worked them faithfully into his manuscript, which having been perused by or on behalf of Mr. Andrew Millar, his publisher, he was informed, that this new and less favoured portrait of that favourite sovereign would be by 500*l.* less saleable than a highly finished copy of that, to which the British eye had been so long accustomed. Mr. Hume took back his manuscript, and complied with the prudential suggestions of his bookseller, observing, with philosophic pleasantry, that 500*l.* was a valuable consideration for settling differences between two old friends about two w—s that had been dead nearly two hundred years. The abilities of Mr. Hume as a writer are allowed by all : his religious doctrines have but few professed supporters ; and his historical

audacity of contradiction in the *British Critic*, so prevalent throughout their two first essays against the *Historical Review*, throws them directly within the observation of a great man, who also had to combat a class of general deniers of palpable verities—*Nec tam pertinaces fore arbitror ut clarissimum solem sanis atque patentibus oculis videre se negent.* LACTANT.

The author is charged (p. 476) with *having passed over sixteen reigns*, viz. from Richard I. to Henry VII. Allowing the charge to be either true or important, it clears him at least of even an attempt to falsify any historical fact during those reigns. He is gratified, however, in the *British Critic's* bringing before the public the

B

transaction

rical veracity will certainly be questioned by those, who credit this anecdote, which can be still verified by many living acquaintance of the late Mr. A. Millar. But, *ex ore tuo, te judico.* Mr. Hume has himself confessed, that *no man has yet arisen, who has been enabled to pay an entire regard to truth, and has dared to expose her without covering or disguise to the eyes of the prejudiced public.* (Hist. of Eng.) With how much more dignity spoke an honest Englishman, ere modern philosophy, deistical scepticism, or political refinement had disguised the British character: *Dura est enim conditio historiographorum: quia si vera dicant, homines provocant: si falsa scripturis commendant, Dominus, qui veridicos ab adulatoribus sequestrat, non acceptat.* MAT. PAR. 774. For hard is the lot of the historian! if he speak truth, he offends man: if by his writings he countenance falsehood, the Lord, who segregates truth-tellers from flatterers, will not receive him.

transaction of the imposture of *Simmel*: for admitting that adherence to the claims of the House of York was no act of rebellion, the attachment of the Irish to the supposed Earl of Warwick is an illustrious instance (amongst many) of the grateful affection of that nation to their benefactors, and of their distinguished loyalty to their lawful sovereign; for presuming that impostor to be the Earl of Warwick, they considered him to be the true Plantagenet.

So gross are the deviations of those bilious critics from the knowledge of the scholar, the fairness of the gentleman, and the candor of the reviewer, that, after having illustrated an instance of each, the author will dismiss them from his thoughts for ever; unless some future well-founded or tempered critique should suggest the inaccuracy or falsehood of some historical fact, which he will then correct, and publicly recognise his obligation to the suggester of the mistatement: for truth, from whatever hand it comes, shall continue to be, as it has hitherto been, the sole object of his attainment.

The *British Critic* (p. 481) betrays the slender store of legal and constitutional knowledge, with which he so confidently arrogates the function of *librorum censor*. In his pruriency for invective, he charges the author with not having read,

or

or not understanding the statute against marrying with the Irish. In turgid hebetude, these time-serving commentators upon the statutes confine the prohibition to intermarriages between the King's subjects and Irish *rebels*, unless they *became denizens*: ignorant that *denization* is the cure of *alienage*, not of *high treason*. But what will the rural curate, who reluctantly pays for the impartial elucubrations of the *British Critic*, as the *sine quâ non* of his promotion, what will his rector, what his ordinary, what will any man, who has hitherto given them credit for the knowledge of the scholar, or even for common honesty, say, when he is apprized, that the 56th page of the *Historical Review*, which has drawn forth their Pharisaical rant, contains the solemn opinion, agreeing with the author's (and with every lawyer's) interpretation of that statute, so recently given as on the 10th of February 1800, by the late Earl of Clare, undoubtedly the most able, and by his creatures and followers cried up as the purest supporter of the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland. "The early policy of the English Government certainly was to discourage all connexion of the colony with the *native* (mark, he says not *rebel*) Irish: it seems difficult, however, to reconcile it to any principle of sound policy: it was a declaration of a perpetual

“ war against not only the native Irish, but against
 “ every person of English blood, who had settled
 “ beyond the limits of the Pale, or from motives
 “ of personal interest or convenience had formed
 “ connexions with the natives (this was no act
 “ of treason), and adopted their laws or customs;
 “ and it had the full effect, which might have
 “ been expected : it drew closer the confederacy
 “ it was meant to dissolve, and implicated the
 “ colony of the Pale in ceaseless warfare and
 “ contention with each other, and with the in-
 “ habitants of the adjacent district.” (Speech of
 the Earl of Clare, in D. P. 9.)

As the author's view was the publication of
 truth, he once thought, as he continues to think,
 that it was his duty to send it forth in the form
 in which it should pass the most current. He
 was aware that, to that class of his readers, who
 are really desirous of attaining the truth, it would
 be immaterial, from whose pen it came : and to
 that class of them, whose prejudices being once
 fixed would reluctantly submit to any truth which
 counteracted them, he presumed the words of one
 of their favourite writers would receive more
 ready credit than those of the author. For this
 reason the author designedly copied from Leland,
 where

where Leland spoke the truth * : particularly concerning the early scenes of the reformation and
its

* The late Dr. Leland is well known to have written his History for a bishopric, which he never attained. It is but a more polished edition of Cox, the falsities of whose work are too rank and numerous for specific refutation. The author never intended to publish a polemical work, to refute other false historians, but to submit to the public a genuine view of the state of Ireland, by tearing away the veil of fictitious story, and exposing facts, such as they were. Dr. Leland was amply furnished with documents for writing a true history of Ireland by several, who were desirous, that historical justice should at length be done to that much-traduced people. He cultivated the acquaintance of, and was in habits of intimacy with the late Mr. Charles O'Connor, of Ballynagare, who was possessed of the best collection of materials for writing Irish history down to the period, to which Dr. Leland carries it, of any individual in Europe, and which is now deposited in the Marquis of Buckingham's library at Stowe. The author has been repeatedly assured by two gentlemen of great respectability now living, that they have heard Dr. Leland assure Mr. O'Connor, that he was fully aware of the false colouring and unfair tendency of his History ; but that the persons, for whom he wrote and published it, would not relish or encourage the work, unless it supported those facts and principles, which had received currency with the English ascendancy in Ireland since the reformation ; admitting he could write a more true, which would, of course, be a less saleable history of that country. The late Mr. Edmund Burke had made some important researches into one particular period of Irish history, the author's representation of which has given such offence to the *British Critic*, and from public records had extracted most authentic documents relative to the Protestant massacre, which would have given a very different cast to the complexion of that supposed event. When Dr. L. undertook to write the history of Ireland, Mr. B.
put

its introduction into Ireland. He said therefore in a note, and it would have been candid in the British Critic to have noticed the words (p. 52), "For very obvious reasons I have chosen to follow Dr. Leland's account of the effect of Archbishop Browne's mission to Ireland."

A reader of the British Critic, giving the writers credit for common honesty and truth, must necessarily infer from these words (p. 475), *As to Mr. Plowden's philippic against coynge and livery, &c.* that the author had indulged in some vehement invective against that usage, which those writers dignified by the appellation of a *philippic*. But what will be the conclusion, when it shall appear that all the author has said of it is thus expressed in p. 41: "It was a system so grievous in its nature, that, had it been confined to that disastrous period of the Irish history, I should have spoken of it with the same freedom

put these and all his other papers into the Doctor's hands, in order that facts might be brought to light, and history bottomed in truth. But truth was not the object of Leland's publication; a good sale was his only aim; and facts, which would have counteracted the prejudices of those, who could afford to buy, were suppressed for fear of blasting with unpalatable truths, the pages of his work. He not only withheld the papers from his History, but from Mr. B. likewise. Mr. B. was never able to obtain them from him again. The truth of this anecdote has been confirmed to the author by several intimate friends of the late Mr. Burke.

“ freedom I have used in narrating other barba-
 “ rous usages, which civilization and political li-
 “ berality have long entombed : but recent revivals
 “ of this system of inhumanity render it prudent
 “ for a modern writer to use other rather than
 “ his own language in detailing these ancient
 “ enormities.” What will be the astonishment,
 that the *philippics* found in the *Historical Review*
 against *coygne and livery*, are those of the first
 law officer of the Crown, and of a Protestant
 divine, and not of a Catholic historian? The
 first of these *philippics* is of Sir John Davies, and
 begins with these remarkable words : “ But the
 “ most wicked and mischievous custome of all
 “ others was that of *coygne and livery*, often be-
 “ fore mentioned, which consisted in taking of
 “ *man’s meate, horse meate, and money* of all the in-
 “ habitants of the country at the will and pleasure
 “ of the soldier ; who, as the phrase of Scrip-
 “ ture is, did eate up the people as it were bread.”
 And it ends with the following remarkable words :
 “ That though it were invented in hell, yet if it
 “ had been used and practised there, as it hath
 “ been in Ireland, it had long since destroyed
 “ the very kingdom of Belzebub.” The second of
 these *philippics* is from the pen of Dr. Leland,
 and is expressed in his strongest colouring : it
 ends with these words : “ Riot, rapine, massacre,
 and

“ and all the tremendous effects of anarchy, were
 “ the natural consequences. Every inconsider-
 “ able party, who under the pretence of loyalty
 “ received the King’s commission to repel the
 “ adversary in some particular district, became
 “ pestilent enemies to the inhabitants. Their
 “ property, their wives, the chastity of their fa-
 “ milies, were all exposed to barbarians, who
 “ sought only to glut their brutal passions, and
 “ by their horrible excesses purchased the curse
 “ of God and man.” If the ire and indignation
 of the British Critic be roused into such pa-
 roxysms by these *philippics*, truth and candour
 must admit, that they are the *philippics* of Sir
 John Davies and Doctor Leland, and not of Mr.
 Plowden.

For the sake of such persons as are ignorant
 of, but who wish to attain the truth of Irish his-
 tory, the author passes not over unnoticed the
 piteous attempt of the British Critic to discredit
 the *Historical Review*, by *falsely* asserting, that it
 is bottomed only upon the authority of some few
 Catholic writers, in palpable contradiction to the
 Protestant historians of Ireland. For the refuta-
 tion of this unmanly falsehood, the author refers
 his readers, and particularly his *English* readers
 (the British Critic has inadvertently uttered one
 truth, p. 464, *That very general is the ignorance,*
which,

which, even at this day, prevails in England of the true state of that country), to the authorities he has quoted in his work, of Dr. Nalson, the Bishop of Derry, and Dr. Warner ; all three Protestant clergymen ; and the author presumes, in as high repute for knowledge, candor, and religion, as the writers of the *British Critic*.

Doctor Nalson says (and the *British Critic* could not wink so hard as not to see it quoted), p. 13, " That Borlase's history of the Irish Rebellion is " rather a paradox than a history, and that his " distorted plagiarism of Lord Clarendon's manuscript rendered him suspected not to be over- " stocked with honesty and justice, so necessary " to the reputation of an unblemished historian. " He wrote for the avowed purpose of defending " the harsh government of his father, Sir John " Borlase, and Sir William Parsons."—The Bishop of Derry admits that " he continued Sir " John Temple's partial and unfaithful Memoirs, " and wrote Reflections upon Lord Castlehaven's " Memoirs, as being openly and avowedly a favourite of the faction, and the men and the " actions of those times."

Doctor Warner is quoted (p. 113), and no man of ordinary understanding will give credit to such severe censors, for having inadvertently overlooked so long and important a quotation from

a Protestant gentleman of their own cloth. "The
 " original Protestant writers of this period are
 " Sir John Temple and Doctor Borlase : the first,
 " who was master of the rolls and a privy coun-
 " sellor, has confined himself entirely to the
 " massacre and rebellion in the early part of it ;
 " and the sense of what he suffered by the insur-
 " rection, together with his attachment to the
 " ministry, led him to aggravate the crimes and
 " cruelties of the Irish : the other was the son
 " of Sir John Borlase, one of the lords justices
 " of that time, and seems to have been an officer
 " in the civil wars, who hath made great use of
 " Temple's History ; and, as far as he liked it,
 " of Lord Clarendon's Vindication of the Mar-
 " quis of Ormonde. If both these authors are
 " to be read with great suspicion of partiality,
 " as they certainly are, except in the copies of
 " original papers, and the facts which tally with
 " them, Sir Richard Cox, who has done little
 " more than transcribe the accounts which they
 " have given, is entitled to still less merit, and
 " yet open to the same suspicion. When he had
 " no longer these to be his guide, the remain-
 " der of his work is little more than an extract
 " from the newspapers and pamphlets of the time,
 " and in no part deserves the name of a history."
 And he further says, " As to all the writers of
 " English

“ English history, who attempt to give any relation of this rebellion, having compiled from some or other of the materials aforementioned, they have copied likewise their mistakes and imperfections ; hence they are so inaccurate, partial, and uninformed, that whoever contents himself with the accounts that he meets with of it, in any of our histories of England (not one excepted) may be said to know little of it.”

The same reverend author, speaking, in the body of his History, of Mr. Hume's gross infidelity, in representing the conduct of Charles I. towards his Irish subjects, says (p. 359), “ To such miserable shifts are able men reduced, when they write to please a party, or to support a character without regard to truth. It is but very little that Mr. Hume hath said on this critical part of King Charles's reign ; but unless he could have said something much more to the purpose than he hath said, he had better have taken the way Lord Clarendon took, and have said nothing at all.” Can they claim title to the fairness of Reviewers, who charge the author (p. 661) *with interdicting any reference to Temple, Borlase, Clarendon, Carte, and Cox, and accusing the Protestants with having commenced the first massacre in 1641 ; a position (they assert) contrary to the faith of history ;* when they must have read the

following words, quoted out of Clarendon (Hist. Rev. 137): “ *About the beginning of November 1641, the English and Scotch forces in Carrickfergus murdered, in one night, all the inhabitants of the island Gee, commonly called Mac-Gee, to the number of above three thousand men, women, and children, all innocent persons, in a time when none of the Catholics in that country were in arms or rebellion. Note, that this was the first massacre committed in Ireland on either side.*” Let any man of common honour or honesty (I appeal to none other) say, is this interdicting the authority of Clarendon? Is this Mr. Plowden’s or Lord Clarendon’s accusation?

Such barefaced attempts to impose upon ignorance or inability to attain the truth, such prostitution to every thing uncandid, such total abandonment of uprightness, will discharge the author from the nauseating task of specifying more of the wilful falsifications and misstatements of the writers of the *British Critic*. They have, however, called upon the author to disclose to the public *his object in publishing such a work, at such a time as the present*, with a further complaint, that *at this unpropitious moment he has thrown down the gauntlet of religious and political controversy* (p. 465). Before the author enters into the detail of the circumstances, under which he wrote and published

published his *Historical Review*, he begs leave to premise, that the work does not contain a single sentence of religious controversy. If the narration of historical truths be, in the language of these *pseudocritics*, *throwing down the gauntlet*, the author declines not the contest with any one, who fairly enters the lists to disprove them.

In the autumn of 1801, the author had in the press a work, that has since appeared, upon the constitution of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, civil and ecclesiastical. It was his intention to have subjoined to it an Appendix, relating to the then recent transaction of the union. The difficulty of procuring any materials for the purpose in London, sharpened his eagerness for research, and led him to contemplate that great event in all its bearings. The subject was not new to him: he had long considered *, as he still does consider, that an incorporate

* The author had, in April 1792, after several conversations with the Minister upon the subject of Ireland, put into his hands the following considerations upon the state of that country, accompanied with a letter, which, should these sheets come under his eye, the author trusts will work an impression on that great man's mind, which either was not produced or not expressed at the time he received them. The writer was ordered, and he obeyed the order, to put a copy into the hands of Mr. Dundas (now Lord Melville). From that hour, though the author frequently solicited an interview with that Minister,

porate union of the two kingdoms must be the greatest blessing to the British Empire, if followed up

Minister, he never could obtain one during the remaining nine years he continued in office, though the objects of his solicitation were of the first national magnitude. Truth alone survives all changes of times, fashions, and circumstances. In justice to himself and family, the author now submits to the impartial public, that letter and that paper, which the consequent conduct of the minister, who received them, towards the writer, shews to have been displeasing or offensive. The fate of the *Historical Review* renders the case of the author the cause of Ireland; and it is now become expedient, just, and necessary, that his negotiations in Downing-Street concerning it should be disclosed.

SIR,

Adelphi, 13th April 1792.

Your apparent surprise at what I hinted to you about Ireland, the last time I had the honour of seeing you, has made me turn my thoughts more than ever to that subject. If the information, which you have received concerning the situation of affairs in that country be contrary to my representation of them, for once I shall cordially rejoice in being deceived. I have used what means I could to come at the truth; and you may rely upon the uprightness of my intentions in communicating to you the contents of the enclosed paper. I have withstood some pressing solicitations to publish an argument in support of the emancipation of Ireland. For very obvious reasons, I have preferred this measure, of submitting privately the grounds of the case to your consideration, that your prudence may apply such remedy, as you shall find the nature of it demands. You will forgive perhaps an officious, certainly a zealous attempt to contribute towards the prevention of very serious evils. I have that confidence in your judgment and resolution, that nothing but misinformation of facts, can betray you into an inefficient measure of Government. I hope, therefore, that my surmise of false reports having been made to you will plead my apology for having troubled you upon the subject. I most devoutly wish
the

up by an indiscriminating adoption of all his Majesty's subjects, in the assumption of the
Imperial

the circumstances not to happen, which, I am sorry to acknowledge, I see the strongest probability of happening. If happily they do not, I shall rejoice in having given an useless alarm: if unfortunately they do, I shall console myself in the consciousness of having done whatever lay in my slender ability to prevent them. My constant ambition is to promote and ensure the welfare and happiness of every part of the British empire.

I have the honour to be with the most respectful deference and highest esteem,

SIR, your devoted and obedient

Humble Servant,

The Rt. Hon. William Pitt.

FRANCIS PLOWDEN.

A sincere well-wisher to Government thinks it a call of duty and loyalty to submit to the Minister the following considerations upon the present state of Ireland.

It is allowed that 3,000,000 of the inhabitants are Roman Catholics. It is a matter of notoriety, that they have petitioned Parliament in vain for the free elective franchise. The indulgences, which have been granted to them by Parliament, affect but few individuals of their body.

The situation of Ireland is at present widely different from what it was twenty years back. The sentiments and feelings of men upon government and subordination are also widely different from what they were five years back. Wherever a government or constitution is radically good, the discussion of its principles will strengthen and confirm it: but where it is otherwise, such discussion must produce a contrary effect.

Every general principle of the British constitution operates in the inverse *ratio* upon Ireland; and the Irish are now taught to see, and spirited up to feel, that a nation cannot be taxed that is not represented, nor bounden by laws, in the framing of which they do not concur. They know themselves to have been loyal to their King and country: they profess that faith, which they
believe

Imperial Parliament's manifesting the same tutelary attention to the interests of the people of
Ireland,

believe their consciences require, which they know to be civilly innoxious, and in no manner repugnant to the spirit of the constitution of their country. They therefore feel themselves galled by persecution and oppression merely on account of their religious persuasion. They know that they form a most decided majority of the nation; and they are now forcibly taught to insist upon the practical effects of the first principle of all civil government, that the free will of the majority can alone bind a nation. The bulk of the Irish Roman Catholics consists of their peasantry. They are chiefly aggrieved by the want of the elective franchise, which subjects them to be constantly postponed in the letting of farms to Protestant 40s. freeholders, to keep up parliamentary influence. Catholic families are daily ejected from their tenements to make room for Protestant 40s. freeholders.

The body of Roman Catholics indeed, is generally inclined to monarchy: the society of United Irishmen of Belfast are mostly, if not entirely, Presbyterians, who are known to be less cordially affected towards monarchy: and it appears evident from their resolutions, oath, and proceedings, that they aim immediately at a total change in the representation of the kingdom of Ireland, intended probably to be followed up by a total separation from this country, and, if possible, by the establishment of a republican democracy.

The attempts of this society to form an union or coalition with the Roman Catholics are unremitted: every lure, every promise, every temptation to civil freedom and liberty, are artfully displayed, and every incentive to retaliate for past horrors or grievances, every provocative to reclaim usurped rights, are most ingeniously and forcibly and seasonably brought forth to keep up the irascibility of those, who have been so sorely hurt at the disdainful rejection of their petition to Parliament for the right of the elective franchise. The few Roman Catholics of landed property, or ostensible respectability, who have signed
any

Ireland, which they do to those of the city of London, or other the most favoured portion of the British empire.

D

He

any instrument to denote or intimate their acquiescence in the deprivation of this great civil right, have either lost their influence upon the body at large, or repented, for having committed themselves upon the question. The body itself has acquired an increased degree of spirit, energy, and determination to pursue this object to every extreme, in proportion as they have been heretofore supposed to be under the influence of Lord Kenmare and others who sided with him.

The unparalleled sufferance and forbearance of the Roman Catholics of Ireland for this last century, under the galling pressure of the severest laws, was solely owing to the influence and exertions of their clergy over their respective flocks. But now, from forming themselves into associations, and being taught to think more fully and freely upon their civil rights, they have determined amongst themselves, that in this they have been deceived and misled by their clergy: that no consideration whatever ought to have withholden them from asserting their just rights, as unoffending members of that society, of which they formed the decided majority. The consequence has been, that the clergy have found it necessary to secede from the committee of the Roman Catholic body. They have also felt, that during this unaccountable and infamous stupor of their body, as they term it, Lord Kenmare had pretended to command and exercise an influence over the body, which he really never possessed; and lest the deception might still continue, they have expelled * him from the committee: and it is notorious, that
his

* The reader is requested to notice, that this paper was not a public historical detail of facts, but a private communication to Ministers of reports then in general circulation, and a reasoning upon the effects of those reports, in the truth of which the Author at that time assured the Minister, he should cordially rejoice in being deceived. The historical
detail

He passed in review all the intermediate scenes exhibited on the theatre of that fatal country
between

his Lordship could not command one single name or signature to an address, that he wished to be presented to Government from his own county of Kerry, where the bulk of his property lies.

The consequences of irritating and provoking the majority of the Irish nation, by the refusal of what they feel they have a right to, are too horrid to dwell upon, and much too serious to trifle with. The resolution, no longer to submit to any incapacities or grievances upon the score of religion, is general with the body. And those who think that the Irish Roman Catholics are now peaceable, inactive, quiet, and contented with their situation, are grossly deceived. A spirit of resistance has pervaded the greater part of them, and is increasing in a rapid though silent manner: the more so at present, as their future measures will be probably planned and concerted by the society of the United Irishmen of Dublin, who have deeper schemes than the Roman Catholics, whom they mean to use as their instruments for executing them.

They are taught and spirited up by some very artful and determinate individuals of their own and of other bodies of men, to be insulted with the very idea of the Protestant ascendancy, to insist upon absolute equality in all civil advantages; to view every ascendancy over the bulk of the nation as an unjust and tyrannical monopoly of a few interested individuals; in a word, not to look upon those their representatives in Parliament, whom they neither elect nor depute. What must be the consequences of an enraged, resolute, and united people, thus tutored, and thus affected?

The

detail of the conduct of the late Lord Kenmare, and some other gentlemen who sided with him, and of their difference from the Catholic Committee, is to be found in the second Volume of the *Historical Review*.

between the years 1792 and 1801 ; he inquired into the effects produced up to that time (the end

D 2

of

The radical defect of redress lies in the act of the 23d of his present Majesty, which established a sort of *imperium in imperio*, and made Ireland independent of our Legislature. A most fatal solecism in politics ; which nothing but an *union* can now possibly correct ; and to that Ireland will object, and England is disabled by this very act to enforce it.

Government best knows of what importance it is to the state, that Ireland should be dependant upon, or united with Great Britain : they will therefore be the proper judges of the necessity of engaging the majority of the nation to relish and support that dependance or *union*. Let them not, therefore, permit the Roman Catholics of Ireland to remain under their present prepossession, that their exclusion from the state is necessary to preserve that dependance or *union*.

Ere some fatal resolution be entered into, let them be convinced that their petition will be attended to, and granted. Under the desperate irritation at its rejection, some moderate men shudder at the violent extremities to which the more active and determinate members of the body are now proceeding.

The Irish are determinately faithful to the cause they embark in, and they would remain loyally attached to their King and their Constitution, were they admitted to an equal participation of it with others. Their religion enforces the observance of civil duties, wherever they have civil rights. It appears the extremity of rashness to alienate their affection, and drive them to the fatal provocation of asserting what they claim as an unalienable right, by force or violence.

If Government wish to preserve the form of the British constitution in Ireland, if the possessors of landed property in that kingdom wish to annex any parliamentary influence to their possessions, if the public wish to avoid bloodshed, to preserve the harmony and ensure the prosperity of that kingdom, it is evident that the content, freedom, and independence of their native tenantry are essentially necessary.

The

of August 1801) by the union ; and he lamented to find, that it became daily less palatable to the people of that part of the United Kingdom. He discovered

The spirit in which very many Roman Catholics have embarked in the resolution of asserting an equal participation of civil rights and advantages with their Protestant brethren, is emphatically expressed in the form of the oath, which is required to be taken by all who enter into the society of United Irishmen, which is as follows : “ I A. B. in the presence of God, do
 “ pledge myself to my country, that I will use all my abilities
 “ and influence in the attainment of an impartial and adequate
 “ representation of the Irish nation in Parliament ; and as a
 “ means of absolute and immediate necessity in the establishment of this chief good of Ireland, I will endeavour, as
 “ much as in my ability, to form a brotherhood of affection
 “ and identity of interests, a communion of rights, and an union
 “ of power among Irishmen of all religious persuasions : without
 “ which every reform in Parliament must be partial, not national,
 “ inadequate to the wants, delusive to the wishes, and insufficient for the freedom and happiness of this country.”

Many thousands of Roman Catholics have already entered into this society. A coalition between the Catholic committee of Dublin and the Dissenters of the north, is already completed, though not with the Roman Catholics of the south-west. The most earnest attempts are made to bring this to bear, and the prevention of it alone can save that country from a general attempt, by means perhaps the most horrible, to throw off their dependance upon this government (if any they still have), and to form a new one for themselves.

The enthusiastic conviction of asserting *civil and religious rights*, superadded to the natural impetuosity of the Irish disposition, and aggravated by the most artful incentives to retaliate for the oppressions and confiscations of their ancestors, must fill every thoughtful person with the awful dread of scenes, at which humanity will shudder, and from which God of his mercy preserve us.

discovered from inquiries, that, so far from its uniting and consolidating the affections of the Irish with those of the British, a general discontent and disgust at the measure seemed to pervade all ranks of people throughout that country. He was assured by an Irish member of the Imperial Parliament, that although he had ever execrated the measure, he had voted for it uniformly from its proposal to its accomplishment ; and that it was, he believed, cordially detested by ninety-nine out of one hundred of his countrymen. It was impossible not to see, that the consequences of the rebellion of 1798 had left an impression of vindictive soreness in the breasts of numerous individuals : and it was evident, that the union had not hitherto counteracted those effects. The efforts of some anti-unionists to discredit the measure, and render it unpopular, were increasing, not abating. To the disaffected, the union offered a plausible ground for indulging an acrimonious disgust at Government. Many of the venal supporters of that measure, having either gotten all they expected, or less than they thought themselves entitled to, were wickedly mischievous in endeavouring to bring it into contempt and hatred. Two powerful arguments were employed in traducing it in the eyes of the Catholics. To the supporters of the measure (they were far the majority),

majority), that they were swindled into that support by false promises and delusive expectations never intended to be realized. To the few who opposed it, it was argued (by the conduct of Government since the Union, the argument now affects the whole body), that their claims and interests will for ever be, as they hitherto have been, neglected, despised, or rejected by the Imperial Parliament. Such reasoning falling in with the seductive artifices of the restless, discontented, vindictive, and desperate (such there are in Ireland to this moment), tended in different ways to estrange the public mind from that affectionate confidence in Government, which is the natural supporter of duty and loyalty. Observation convinced the author, that the bulk of the *Orangemen* were from principle, disposition, and interest, determined *anti-unionists*; that with this body of men it had been long a practice to measure and appraise their own loyalty by traducing such of their fellow-subjects as they excluded from their societies (the exclusion of the Catholics extended to a population of nearly four millions), holding out their Catholic countrymen as rebels and traitors from disposition, principle, and religion; that the quintessence of *Orangism* was necessarily productive of disunion and enmity between the members of the *Orange* clubs, and those who
could

could not be admitted into them. The prevailing belief * that their Viceroy, when Colonel of the Cambridge

* Since the publication of the first edition of the *Postliminious Preface*, the author has been favoured with a document, which strongly repels the report of his Excellency's ever having been sworn into an *Orange lodge*. It was probably set afloat by the orangemen themselves, with a view to give respectability to their declining credit on one hand, and to follow up their innate spirit of disunion, by rivetting a diffidence between the mass of the people and the chief governor, on the other. During the time that the Cambridgeshire militia remained in Ireland, the chief, if not the only public lodges or societies then subsisting, were those of *Orange-men*; and they were then seen in the true light by this nobleman. He could not but be sensible of the artful practices of many members of these lodges and societies to exacerbate the spirit of the newly arrived troops beyond the generous and manly bravery of the British soldier. His Lordship accordingly issued the following salutary order, which has been sent to the author from a gentleman of respectability, as extracted from the Cambridgeshire regimental order book :

“ *Dublin, April 17th, 1799.*

“ *REGIMENTAL ORDERS,*

“ *The Earl of Hardwicke having been informed that several*
 “ *Lodges and Societies exist in this town and other parts of*
 “ *Ireland, formed for party and other mischievous purposes,*
 “ *under various denominations, makes it his particular request*
 “ *to all the officers not to suffer themselves to become members of*
 “ *any of them ; and all the non-commissioned officers, and soldiers,*
 “ *are strictly forbidden to be members of any such lodges or*
 “ *societies, or to frequent them under any pretence.*

“ *Any man discovered to have transgressed this order, must*
 “ *expect the consequence of such disobedience.”*

It is to be lamented, that when this noble Colonel became the Chief Governor of Ireland, some act of state was not passed

Cambridgeshire militia, had been sworn into an *Orange lodge* (the author has not attempted to verify the fact), tended to weaken the personal confidence of those, who considered all *Orange-men* indiscriminately bounden by ties and engagements adverse to the Catholic interests, and who experimentally remarked the exclusive preference and predilection of the members of that society in the dispensation of grace and favour from the Castle.

Under these impressions the author solicited, and was quickly honoured with an appointment to wait on Mr. Addington ; when he submitted to him, that the calumny, traduction, and misrepresentation, under which the bulk of the Irish laboured, was a national grievance ; that nothing could tend more powerfully to excite and promote rebellion, than to hold out, consider, and deal with them as with incorrigible rebels by disposition, principle, and religion : that the evil was increased by the countenance and forced circulation given to Sir R. Musgrave's Memoirs of the Irish Rebellions ; a work so false, inflammatory, and malignant, that Lord Cornwallis had been forced

passed for checking or breaking up all these lodges and societies, formed for party and other mischievous purposes, the evil tendency of which his Lordship once clearly saw and so prudently guarded his regiment against.

forced publicly to disclaim the dedication of it : that the Irish nation was pre-eminently fond of historical justice, and felt more sensibly than any other people the deprivation of it : that it therefore had become an object of national importance, that a fair, impartial, and authentic history of that country should be written, to counteract the effects of Sir R. Musgraves's, and such other *Orange* publications, in order to reconcile the public mind in Ireland to the measure of union. That the Premier might be put into the full possession of the author's sentiments upon the state of Ireland, he delivered to him a copy of the before-mentioned letter and paper, written twelve years before, and took the liberty of desiring that they might be kept by him as a test of his sentiments, and a pledge of his fidelity in executing the commission, which he then received, of writing an impartial and authentic history of Ireland, to shew the utility, and reconcile the Irish mind to the prospective advantages of the union. When on this occasion the author's proposal was acceded to by the Minister, a gracious remark accompanied that accession, that he was happy in employing the author's talents in an undertaking of so much utility to the public; and when reference was made to the observations of the Member of Parliament before noticed, upon the unpopu-

harmony of the union, Mr. Addington observed, that *he feared that feeling was but too general in Ireland*. The author having consented to take the work in hand, and to go over to Ireland during the vacation, to procure materials and information, the Premier remarked, that the only remaining consideration was, to settle what compensation the author should be allowed for his time and trouble in going over to Ireland; the immediate reply was, that, confiding in the ultimate remuneration of Government, upon the accomplishment of his mission with fidelity, he should hope for the present, that some few hundred pounds would not be found unreasonable. The Minister consented to allow him three hundred pounds; one hundred to be paid down, the second hundred at Michaelmas, and the third hundred to be paid when the author should be ready to go to press. The Minister assured him he was to be put to no expense or disbursement in procuring the materials necessary for the undertaking; he was to publish in his own name, and at his own risk, and to take no advantage of the support and countenance of Government. The interview ended in the promise of such a recommendation to Mr. Abbott, the Secretary, as should in every sense secure to the author a satisfactory reception at the Castle.

having

Having collected some books upon the subject of Irish affairs, in London, he arrived in Dublin in the beginning of September 1801, where having opened his mission to Mr. Secretary Abbott, he was coldly received, and laconically assured, that without instructions he could give no countenance to an undertaking, to which he was till then an utter stranger. On that day the author reported himself to Mr. Addington, arrived in Dublin, and gave him an account of his reception at the Castle. Before any answer could have arrived to his letter, the author received a summons to attend at the castle, from Mr. Alexander Marsden, who informed him, that orders had been received from Downing-street, to furnish him with materials for writing the History of the Union. Mr. Under-Secretary, to whom the author was a stranger, received him very graciously, and conversed upon the subject of the undertaking for nearly two hours; he was particularly inquisitive about the period, from which the history was to be deduced, the size of the work, the probable time of its appearance, and the nature of the documents and materials, to which he wished to have access, or to be furnished with. To these inquiries it was answered, that the intention was to give to the public such a portion of Irish history as should shew the necessity of an incorporate union, by

contrasting the evils which that country had suffered from the want of union, against the advantages which they had a well-founded expectation of deriving from the enjoyment of it ; and meaning to write an *authentic* history, he should find it requisite to annex a copious appendix to the work, to which the readers might be referred for documents, that would be found tedious by some, if retailed in the body of it. Many state papers would therefore be wanting. This was instantly resisted ; and the author was given to understand, that documents of that nature were wholly inaccessible ; he was assured, with fully as much confidence as truth, that all such papers and documents were the property of the different secretaries, who carried them away upon quitting their office ; that in the progress of time, the papers of Lords *Hobart, Pelham, Castlereagh, &c.* might come to be published as historical curiosities, like those of *Strafford, Ormond, Essex, Boulter, &c.* Circumstanced as the author was, and considering Mr. Marsden as uttering the instructions of Mr. Secretary Abbot, who upon the first dawn of the undertaking had shewn his marked disapprobation of it, tamely remarked, that it was not for him to dictate ; he was under orders, and should endeavour to the best of his abilities to make the proper use of whatever materials he should be

be furnished with ; remarking at the same time, that a difference of opinion in the two cabinets appeared rather singular, now that the union had taken place. But as no authentic history could be written without the aid of the journals and statutes, they were instantly promised ; and when it was urged, that many proclamations, addresses, and other such pieces, could not be dispensed with, Mr. Under-Secretary replied, that as they had all appeared in different newspapers, the author might extract from them. Upon assurance, however, that after a diligent search through Dublin, no files of newspapers could be found, even for three years back, an offer was made to lend the author the regular files of the *Freeman's Journal*, which were kept in the Castle. From these, during his stay in Dublin, the author procured such extracts to be made by a scrivener as he conceived would be wanting for his history.

It was recommended to the author to wait again upon Mr. Abbott, who was only visible at the Castle on Tuesdays and Fridays, from the hours of eleven till four, upon business. On the ensuing Tuesday the author announced himself to Mr. Abbott at eleven, and was admitted at ten minutes before four o'clock. Mr. Secretary was on his legs, booted and spurred, on the point of departing : he made some excuse for having kept him

him so long in waiting, and gave him an order for the statutes and journals. On this day the author wrote fully to Mr. Addington upon his disappointment at his reception at the Castle ; observing, that the refusal of access to the state papers in Ireland would be of less consequence, as he presumed that duplicates of all the material documents must be found in England, and that it would rest with him to admit the author to them upon his return. During two months residence in Ireland, the author collected whatever materials and information he could acquire for his undertaking.

With very intense application, the author had, by the end of January 1802, prepared sufficient manuscript to go to press ; and as he had offered to submit it to the perusal of any person, whom Mr. Addington should appoint on his behalf, he carried the manuscript to Mr. Hiley Addington, who had hitherto been his paymaster, to know before whom the manuscript should be laid, and to solicit the third and last payment of one hundred pounds. Now, for the first time, the author remarked an unwillingness on the part of his employers that the work should go on. A peremptory refusal to make good the last payment alarmed him ; and he was astonished to be told by Mr. Hiley Addington, that it
had

had been promised only after publication of the work; and moreover, that it might never become due, as the work, if disapproved of, might never be published at all. To this the author, with some firmness replied; he was confident, that, were he honoured with an interview with Mr. Addington, he could readily bring to his recollection the particulars of the proposal and agreement about the payment of the money: but as to the publication of the work, after the trouble which he had already taken, and that it was known to several, that he had engaged in the undertaking, it should be said by none, that he had failed in what he had taken in hand; and that the work should positively appear, though under the correction of Mr. Addington, as he had agreed, (and he never swerved from his word). He then had by him a folio manuscript of six hundred pages, ready to submit to perusal, and would engage regularly to furnish his censor and printer with a constant supply of manuscript till the whole should be completed.

Reflection upon what had passed with Mr. Hiley Addington, induced the author to solicit an interview with the Minister, expressing in his letter for that purpose, his astonishment at the misrepresentation of the agreement made by his brother,

brother, who was not privy to it. After the lapse of some days he procured the honour of an appointment ; and, after he had waited some time with his manuscript in Downing Street, he was remitted to a future day by Mr. Hiley Addington. Five subsequent appointments were made and ended in the same manner : an unforeseen press of business, or the intervention of some one of more consequence prevented his admission. A fresh appointment brought the author and his manuscript a sixth time to Downing Street, where, after having waited for three quarters of an hour, he was in the old style again remitted to the following day. Upon retiring, the author was accosted by Mr. Hiley Addington, and imperiously told, that, had he chosen to have been punctual to his time, his brother would have seen him. The author replied, that he had arrived in Downing Street five minutes before the hour of appointment. *That cannot be*, said Mr. Hiley Addington ; and instantly demanded to see his note, which the author had not about him ; relying however on the correctness of his memory, he promised to be punctual also to the hour on the next day.

Suspicious now became convictions that Mr. Hiley Addington had adopted all the prepossessions and prejudices of certain gentlemen against
the

the commission given to the author to write a history, which it was neither their wish nor their interest should appear in the garb of truth. He thenceforth considered him as the tool employed to provoke, irritate, or force the author into an abandonment of the undertaking. That was vain. Every such attempt put him upon his guard, and invigorated his determination to complete his labours, with punctilious attention to the terms of his original engagement. To this no third person was privy; and to the non-interference of a third person the author attributes the Minister's prompt candor and fairness in acceding to the terms of his original proposal. He gives credit to the Premier for uprightness of intention, where his feelings are not affected, his judgment warped, or his conduct overawed by art, influence, or power.

The next appointment was more fortunate to the author: he was admitted to the presence of the Minister for the first time since his return from Ireland; and with him he found Mr. Hiley Addington; whether as a witness, adviser, or controller, he knows not. The first word uttered at this meeting was by the author, who apologized to the Minister for the apparent inattention to his commands on the preceding day. He held the letter of appointment in his hand, offering to

shew it to the Premier, in justification of his punctuality. That this supposed or wished-for want of punctuality had been the subject of conversation, and perhaps of difference, between the brothers, was evident, from the Minister's then uttering these words, with a familiar nod, *I told you so, brother*. Instantly the letter was snatched violently out of the author's hand, from behind, by Mr. Hiley Addington, and committed to the flames. A dead silence ensued for about a minute. The author with difficulty believed, but fortunately reflected where he was. When ordered to be seated, he observed, that, to his mortification, he was received with a very different countenance from that which he had noticed at his last interview. Conscious of having pursued his engagement with unrelenting assiduity and punctilious fidelity, he entreated to be informed of the cause of the difference. He was sternly assured, that it rested with himself: for that he had been the only individual in the nation, who had the indelicacy to break in upon the Minister's feelings by pressing for an interview, when he was suffering under the domestic misfortune of his daughter's illness. The author's embarrassment and mortification were now turned into amazement. After the Minister had thrice attended in his place in the House of Commons,

the

the author conceived there could be no indelicacy on that score in an insignificant individual's soliciting an interview upon private business. He had, however, an apology to offer for having unguardedly, and he now found most unwarrantably, presumed to intermix his sympathies with an official application to the Prime Minister of State: and he then recollected that in one of his notes he had presumed to say, *that he made large allowances to family feelings and anxiety, having himself been drenched in domestic calamity—* (the author alluded to the recent misfortune of his having lost his two eldest children). This interview ended in the Minister's consenting to pay the remainder of his engagement, and intimating to the author, who had with him a large folio volume of manuscript, that, if it were perused on his behalf, no responsibility would rest with the author; if otherwise, none would lie with the Minister. Mr. Addington appeared unwilling to name a person to peruse the manuscript, and left it to the discretion of the author, who undertook to use it to the best of his judgment.

It must be observed, that, before the author went to Ireland, he had made arrangements with Mr. Egerton for the publication of his work; but as he declined going to press, 'till he had come

to a thorough understanding with his employers, Mr. Egerton, from whom the author concealed nothing relating to the work, positively declined the undertaking, lest it might not be agreeable to Government; he accordingly wrote to Mr. Hiley Addington, to be distinctly informed, whether, by undertaking the work, he should please or displease the powers, upon which his interests as general bookseller to the army so materially depended. An assurance against any displeasure from Government, in a letter from Mr. Hiley Addington, brought back Mr. Egerton to his old, or induced him to form a new resolution to undertake it. The author's difficulties with his bookseller lasted some months.

The author continued his literary labours; and the printer manifested no ordinary exertions in forwarding the work. In the autumn of 1802, the History had been brought down to that period, at which it became necessary to have access to some modern state-papers; and as Irish affairs were frequently debated in the British Parliament, the author felt the want of the latter part of the British journals and debates. He had before made an unsuccessful application for them to Mr. Hiley Addington. He now found the necessity of the most guarded caution in all his communications with his employers. On Michael-

mas

mas Day he wrote the following letter to the Minister :

SIR, *Essex-Street, 29th September 1802.*

Having reasonable expectations that my History will be published early in the month November, I feel it my duty to renew my application to you, to know whether it be your wish that I should be admitted to the sight of any of the state-papers relating to Ireland for these last twenty years, which I expected to have seen, when I was honoured with your recommendation to the Castle of Dublin. Of my disappointment on that head I wrote to you fully from Ireland last year. If not, I must conclude, as I have hitherto proceeded, with the aid of the shop and the stall. I humbly beg leave to repeat my request for the English Parliamentary debates from the conclusion of Chandler's. If you have any commands to honor me with, relating to the publication, they shall be faithfully attended to.

I have the honor to be, with the highest esteem and respect,

SIR,

Your most devoted and obedient,

Humble Servant,

FRANCIS PLOWDEN.

To the Rt. Hon. Henry Addington.

To this letter, after the lapse of six weeks, he received the following answer :

SIR,

SIR, *Downing Street, Nov. 16, 1802.*

I am desired by my brother to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th September, and to apologize for having so long delayed to answer it. There seems *now* no possibility of

^{now}
your having access to the state-papers which you mention: and my brother seems to think that any bookseller's shop can furnish you with the Parliamentary Debates.

I remain, SIR,

Your most obedient humble servant,

F. Plowden, Esq.

J. HILEY ADDINGTON*.

This letter bespoke a change in the mind and counsels of the Minister respecting the author's commission. The redundant eagerness in interlining an additional *now*, demonstrated the prominent zeal with which Mr. Hiley Addington conveyed this refusal of the author's request; and is evidence, that there had been a time, when such access to the state papers was intended to have been allowed. As, however, no countermand or fresh instructions were ever communicated to the author, his duty remained the same, from the acceptance

* These two letters are submitted to the public, as conclusive evidence, that the author ardently wished and earnestly endeavoured to lay before them, the whole truth of the Irish history; and that the present Minister, his whisperers, advisers, or directors, were determined to suppress as much of it as possible.

acceptance of his commission in August 1801, to the close of his labours in June 1803*.

Whoever considers, that a space of about one hundred and thirteen years from the Revolution
in

* The author submits to the reader the following letter to the Minister, written about one month before the publication, as a proof of his continued adherence to the spirit and terms of his original engagement.

SIR,

Essex Street, 12th May, 1803.

I have the honour to inform you, that I have at length come to the end of my laborious undertaking. But although I have finished the manuscript, it will be some time before the printer will have completed his part, as the Index and other matter of that sort proceed more slowly than the body of the work. When the whole is finished, I shall entreat your leave to present you a copy. The work has grown very considerably and very unexpectedly under my pen. It contains the quantity of four usual quarto volumes. Although its bulk have retarded the publication far beyond my expectation, yet I cannot help feeling that the present moment is providentially critical for its publication. As you, Sir, must know, better than I can, the powerful and artful means that are at present employed in Ireland to alienate the public mind and affections from the British Government, it is now imperiously necessary, that the Irish should feel the effects of the Union. I speak as I judge and feel, and I hope I may say without offence, *Discite justitiam moniti et non temnere Iernam*. I take this opportunity of acknowledging your kindness in patronizing the work, and of assuring you of the punctilious fidelity, with which I have endeavoured to comply with the terms of my undertaking.

I have the honour to be, with the most profound respect and deference,

SIR,

Your devoted and obedient humble servant,

The Rt. Hon. Henry Addington.

FRANCIS PLOWDEN.

in 1688 to the Union in 1801, was a trackless, unbeaten, and perilous field for an historian to travel over, it will not surprise him, that the latter part of the work should have swollen into a bulk that far exceeded the author's original expectations. It is now before the public, as the British Critic observes, *with all its imperfections upon its head*. From the imperfections more or less incidental to all literary productions, it is not the intent of the author to undertake its defence. He has endeavoured throughout to use the undorned language of simplicity, as the appropriate vehicle of truth *. But as the truth of facts was the substantial object of his undertaking, he again asserts, that he is guilty of no intentional, and, he confides, of no actual deviation from this sacred duty of the historian.

After the work had made its appearance, it soon became evident to the author, from the total silence of the Minister and several of his colleagues, to whom he had sent it, that it had not altogether met that approbation, which the author once expected, and incessantly endeavoured to merit. The reluctance of his publisher to advertise, his slackness in subscribing, and backwardness

* *Nilil est in historiâ purâ et illustri brevitate dulcius.*

Cic. in Brut.

wardness in pushing the sale of the work, after the most urgent importunities of the author, became so many proofs of his acting under an influence, if not an indemnity to check the circulation of it. The work appeared in June, 1803, and its subsequent fate has created the necessity of this Postliminious Preface. It is no longer a private case; it is a public cause: it involves the dearest interests of the most important, because the most vulnerable part of the British empire. It will develop in detail, and fitting it is, that Ireland, that Great Britain, that the world should know who are the men, who oppose the emancipation of Ireland; what are their views and motives for such opposition, and what the ways and means of effectuating it.

In the intermediate time between the publication of the work and Michaelmas last, the author frequently and urgently solicited the Minister for an interview. It was at last accorded on the 28th of September, 1803. The circumstances under which the *Historical Review* was written and published, and the conduct of the Minister with reference to it, since its publication, render every act that affects the work, a matter of public concern; and sanctions, therefore, the publication of what passed in Downing Street upon the subject of it. The author submitted to the Minister,

nister, that, after the Herculean labour of bringing before the public such a body of history so peculiarly relevant to the critical circumstances of the day, it was a painful disappointment to him to have brought upon himself the displeasure and offence of the Minister, not for having disobeyed, but for having punctiliously adhered to the spirit and tenor of the terms of his commission and undertaking. Mr. Addington admitted the displeasure and offence, and went the length of assuming no small portion of merit for suppressing his indignation; he had not read a line of the work himself, but he was informed by others (who may have rested their charges upon report, as the Minister did his feelings), that the most unwarrantable freedom had been taken in speaking of certain characters, to which government looked up for the salvation of Ireland; that the general bearing and uniform spirit of the work diametrically contravened his intentions and expectations in countenancing and encouraging the undertaking; that the errors and faults (if any had ever existed) of his Majesty's servants ought to have been suppressed, not exposed; in a word, that the author should have striven to render his work palatable to his employers; and he then sorely lamented, that he had not procured it to be perused on his behalf. To these observations the author replied, that he
had

had been most explicit in disclosing the spirit, views, and motives of his undertaking, when he first made overtures to the Minister on the subject; that in addition to his verbal statement, he had left with him the written document laid before Messrs. Pitt and Dundas in 1792, as a pledge of his sentiments upon the state of Ireland, and the expediency of her being united with Great Britain. (Had these sentiments not been then approved of by the Minister, the work would not have been taken in hand.) That whatever subsequent changes had been produced in his mind, he had never condescended to communicate any of them to the author: that at all events, without revocation or countermand, his original instructions continued to bind and guide him in the execution of his commission. That it was moreover impossible for the author to suppose he meant to have an untrue and unfaithful history given to the public; that the very commission to write history was to a man of character, a special commission to write a *true* one; that had he written a partial, unfaithful, time-serving history, he might perhaps have looked up to him for grace, favour, or remuneration; but he must for ever have renounced the character of the historian: that it was beyond the powers of man to write a faithful history of recent events, especially

of such as had lately been exhibited in Ireland, without wounding the feelings of many of the actors in those scenes; but to meet those *desu-gremens*, the mind of the man, who took the pen in his hand to write modern history, was to be made up in the first instance. The author gave a solemn assurance to the Minister, remarking that he believed few historians would join him in the declaration, that he was ready to call God to witness, that he had not throughout the work related one historical fact, which he did not believe to be true, nor made an observation, by which he did not mean to promote peace, harmony, and good will between the inhabitants of the sister islands*.

Mr. Addington referred with peculiar emphasis to the question, which he observed, and the
author

* After the consciousness of upright intention, the next satisfactory reward of human actions in this life, is the approbation of the wise, great, and good man. On the 2d of January last, the author had the high gratification of receiving a letter from Mr. Grattan, upon his History, containing amongst other, the following testimony of his approbation: *You are one of the very few Irish historians, who have ventured to deal in the commodity called truth. You have done so like a man with vigour and ability against the tide of power and prejudice. You must look to the reward of merit, i. e. the censure of those, whose censure is panegyric. And Some of those, who have attempted to write the history of Ireland are men who sold themselves and the country. Their history is their apology, not the recitation of facts. They are bigots, and they are slaves, bought and sold. Your history carries in it a characteristic stamp, that it was written by a free man.*

author admitted, was very improperly called *Catholic Emancipation* ; he took peculiar pains to convince the author, that his opinions upon that important subject had been made up on the purest motives of conscience. The author here observed, that he was the last man in the world to refuse to others what he himself claimed so strongly, against the prejudices and even against the laws of his country, namely, the right of forming his own conscientious convictions. Mr. Addington then remarked, that he repented not having sooner reflected what must have been the author's sentiments upon this question, *by the resistance of which he stood in that house*, and which he should ever continue to oppose till his latest breath ; and he added, that the author knowing, as he must have known, his, (the Minister's) sentiments upon this subject, ought, from the nature of his employment, to have paid peculiar deference to them in his History. The author admitted, that he was in part aware of his *public* opinion upon the question of *Catholic Emancipation*, and being himself a Catholic, he had scrupulously refrained from making a single observation of his own upon that subject in the History : adhering to the strictest duty of the annalist in the faithful narration of what others had said and done upon it. *That*, replied Mr. Addington, *might be more effectual*

effectual than any thing of your own. The author would not dissemble, that whilst he was writing, he so conceived it would be. The Minister manifested more than ordinary astonishment, apparently not unmixed with anger, when the author informed him, that he had given in a note to his History the papers put into the hands of Earl Fingall, and Dr. Troy, by Mr. Pitt, and Marquis Cornwallis, respecting their going out of office upon their inability to carry the Catholic question*. The author met the rising displeasure of the

* In Mr. Pitt's paper the Catholics are assured, that the then leading part of his Majesty's Ministers finding unsurmountable obstacles to the bringing forward measures of concession to the Catholic body, whilst in office, had felt it impossible to continue in administration under the inability to propose it with the circumstances necessary to carrying the measure with all its advantages, and they had retired from his Majesty's service, considering this line of conduct as most likely to contribute to its ultimate success. The Catholic body might with confidence rely on the zealous support of all those who then retired, and of many who remained in office, when it could be given with a prospect of success. They might be assured that Mr. Pitt would do his utmost to establish their cause in the public favour, and prepare the way for their finally attaining their objects.

Marquis Cornwallis's paper is intitled, *The Sentiments of a sincere Friend to the Catholic Claims*. It purports, that if the Catholics should proceed to violence, or entertain any ideas of gaining their object by convulsive measures, or forming associations with men of Jacobinical principles, they must of course lose the support and aid of those, who have sacrificed their own situations in their cause; but who would, at the same time, feel it

the Premier, by submitting to him the utter impossibility of suppressing documents of such consequence, which manifested to the nation, or rather to the whole British empire (they are not slightly affected by the change) the grounds, upon which Mr. Pitt and his friends retired from office; consequently of those, upon which his successors came in. In the course of this interview Mr. Addington very distinctly, and very forcibly, thrice intimated to the author, that by his pledged resistance to this question of Catholic emancipation, he had come into and continued *in that house*. The author presuming, that his Majesty had other motives for promoting him to that important station, took the liberty of expressing his hopes, that he was not inexorable in that opposition; he replied, he was not to be moved from it.

Another topic of conversation at this interview was far from being unimportant to the public. The primary object of the author's commission
was

it to be their indispensable duty to oppose every thing tending to confusion.

On the other hand, should the Catholics be sensible of the benefits they possess by having so many characters of eminence pledged *not to embark in the service of Government except on the terms of the Catholic privileges being obtained*, it is to be hoped, that in balancing the advantages and disadvantages of their situation, they would prefer a quiet and peaceable demeanour to any line of conduct of an opposite description. Vide Hist. Rev. vol. ii. p. 944.

was to convert the truth of Irish history into evidence of the utility and advantages of incorporate union; it was but therefore consistent, that the historian should, as far as truth would bear him out, commend the system of Marquis Cornwallis's government of that country. The commendation of that humane, just, and firm governor became indirect censure upon the opposite system of government pursued by his immediate predecessor; and the author submitted to the Premier, that he did not conceive he could do more honour to Earl Camden, than to say of him what the Earl of Clare avowed in the Irish Lords in January 1798, that the system of coercion was extorted from him; and as it was evident, that this system had diffused a wide and deep sense of soreness and disaffection throughout the country, it became the duty of the historian to remove the odium of those measures, as far as truth would allow, from the door of the British cabinet. He had therefore thrown it where it immediately rested, upon a certain triumvirate, who then monopolized the political power of that country. They have since been chiefly removed from it by the hand of God or the power of the executive. The author was here sharply interrogated, whether he could for an instant presume it to have been the Minister's wish or intention, that a syllable should have dropped
from

from the author's pen to the disparagement of the respectable names of *Clare*, *Foster*, and *Beresford*. He scouted the idea of any difference of principle or system in the two governments of Earl Camden and Marquis Cornwallis. It was an identity of spirit and principle applicable to the varying circumstances of a rising, raging, and expiring rebellion *. Mr. Addington very significantly

H

assured

* Such also was the language of every other gentleman connected with or dependant upon the present administration, with whom the author, at any time since the publication of his history, has conversed upon the subject of it. They have been all taught to identify the spirit and principle of the governments of Earl Camden and Marquis Cornwallis; as if a besotted public would second their attempt to varnish over a system of discord, blood, and terror (the discordant part of it has been since revived), with the wisdom and lustre of the opposite measures of his immediate successor; or to defile the moderate, humane, just, firm, and uniting system of Marquis Cornwallis with the slightest tint, shade, or spirit of that system of acerbity, which the late Lord Clare vaunted had been extorted from Earl Camden. So spoke Mr. Wickham to the author on the 24th day of July last (the day after the late explosion in Dublin). In a conversation of nearly two hours, Mr. Secretary distinctly disclosed to the author the grounds of the Minister's displeasure and offence at his history: it treated with unseemly freedom some of the most revered characters of that nation: it spoke disrespectfully of persons (the Orange-men) to whom Government looked up for the salvation of the country: it retailed horrors beyond those of the French revolution. When the author surmised the probability of some immediate attempts of the discontented in Ireland, he was boastingly assured of the unprecedented tranquillity and content diffused through the country by means of the mild and conciliatory measures of the Castle.

Thus

assured the author, that he knew not the grounds, views, or motives, of Lord Cornwallis's actions.

This

Thus also spoke Viscount Castlereagh to the author on the 15th of August; and who should better know the different systems, than the Secretary at the close of Lord Camden's and through the whole of Lord Cornwallis's administration? He also identified the views, spirit, principles, and measures of the two governments. When this Noble Lord assured the author; that he had never before that day heard of such a work as the *Historical Review*, the author apologized for not having sent a copy of it to his Lordship, fearing thereby to offend him, as he conceived he had offended others. The author was probably more sensible than an indifferent person of his Lordship's ignorance of the publication two months after it had been before the public. His astonishment however abated on reflecting, that this was the same Noble Lord, who in the Imperial House of Commons on the 18th of March 1801, (Vide Parl. Reg. 435) in all the pomp of official solemnity alleged, that no *torture had been used in Ireland under the authority, or with the approbation of Government*. Notwithstanding it be matter of lamentable notoriety, that triangles were kept in daily and often in hourly agitation on the Royal Exchange, on the old Custom-house Quay, in Mr. Beresford's Riding-house, the Prevost at the Barracks, in the Arsenal-yard within the Castle, and other places in Dublin, for several months together, in the year 1798, when this Noble Lord was Secretary, and consequently must have known, that such unconstitutional engines (how could he be ignorant?) were worked with the authority and approbation of that Government, of which he was the active minister. The sufferings and cries of these tortured victims were certainly calculated to make a deeper impression upon his Lordship's conceptions and memory, than Mr. Egerton's *extensive* advertisements of the *Historical Review*. This ignorance and denial of the Government's sanctioning the torture seemed confined to this Noble Lord; for even Mr. J. C. Beresford admitted (Parl. Reg. 439) *such severities*

This the author admitted the possibility of; he could not however presume, that in so manly, humane, just, and noble a character, there lurked in the back ground any views or motives imperious to the observation of every candid bystander; and he asserted with more than ordinary firmness, that he had, notwithstanding, reason for insisting, that his Lordship's *sentiments with regard to Ireland were well known by the measures he pursued, and those which he recommended**.

H 2

The

rities to have been really exercised in many cases; that punishments had been inflicted for the purpose of extorting confessions from those who were suspected to have concealed arms, he would not, and it would be unmanly in him to deny. Such, finally, was the language, not indeed of Lord Pelham, but of his confidential friend and secretary Sir George Shee, Baronet. The author fears the presentation of a copy of his work proved offensive to this Noble Lord; for all that he heard of its reception from Sir George Shee was, that the representation made by the author (*Hist. Rev.* vol. ii. 667) of his Lordship's resignation under a disgust at the system of blood, in sympathy with Earl Camden, was an erroneous and false statement. He was assured by the Honorable Baronet, that disease alone prevented him from continuing to co-operate in measures, which he cordially approved of, and to the prosecution of which he was eager to return, had his state of health allowed him so to do. The author promised to seize the earliest opportunity to recant his error; it has now become necessary, as a contrary opinion has prevailed, namely, that he quitted the country under a want of nerve to weather the storm, which the system had so effectually raised.

* The author had at that time in his pocket a letter from the Marquis, containing those words, which however he did not shew to the minister.

The result of this interview with the Premier convinced the author more forcibly than ever of the powerful interest attempted to be raised against the question of *Catholic emancipation* ; and that its having been made the ground of resignation in the last, and the tenure, by which the present administration hold their offices, it becomes an object of very interesting anxiety to a very large and very important part of the British empire. As the author abstained in the body of his History from making any observations upon the merits of the question, he now confines himself to the statement of some of the consequences of the extreme vehemence, with which the opposition to that question is maintained, and of the effects it produces upon the people, whom it chiefly affects. The question having been of such magnitude as to give either cause or pretext for the resignation of Mr. Pitt and his friends in the most awful crisis of public affairs, the thoughts of every observer of the political events of the day must at one time or other have been turned to the consideration of it. It has latterly become of the more singular importance, from having brought the two great rival statesmen to a full coincidence of opinion upon the imperious necessity of the measure. Mr. Fox, and the adherents to his political principles, have always, and under
all

all circumstances, been staunch advocates for the measure, upon large constitutional grounds. Mr. Pitt, after having for nearly twenty years resisted or kept back the question, after having experienced the effects of withholding it, after having contemplated the fatal consequences of a dire rebellion, and after having, by the most extraordinary exertions of Government influence, composed the troubles of distracted Ireland in the uniting arms of Great-Britain, became so sincere a convert to the opinions of his rival upon this question, that he sacrificed his political existence to the truths, which he had so long combated, resisted, or evaded. Experience of the want of that measure through the awful period of fifteen years of the most convulsed politics ever recorded in history, taught him a lesson, which his great mind could no longer stand against. His heroic retirement from office on such constitutional grounds reconciled many of his former opponents to his uprightness and sincerity, and in the eyes of his friends it raised him to the pinnacle of political greatness.

While the Earl of Rosslyn was the keeper of his majesty's conscience, the question was first moved and publicly mooted, whether the emancipation of Ireland would be an infringement of the coronation oath. The doctrine was particularly

ticularly enforced in the enfeebling hour of disease, and the impression gained with convalescence. Many pamphlets appeared on each side. It created a new point for political adventurers to rally round; all the seceders from Mr. Pitt, who emulated not his virtue in sacrificing situation to principle, ranged themselves under this new banner. Individuals from every party fell occasionally into the treasury ranks. Some solemnly recanted their opinions; others, with an affected blush at open prostitution, pretended to retain their maiden principles, but deprecated the time for giving them effect*. All were well received. On one side the whole corps in office, flanked by all the dependants and expectants upon Government patronage, and supported by certain members of the two hierarchies †, British and Hibernian, maintained, that

Catholic

* When this subject was brought before the British Parliament, it was observed by Mr. Fox, that there were two seasons, in which it was sure to be resisted by Ministers, viz. *war* and *peace*. In the Irish Parliament, it was remarked by Mr. Grattan and Mr. G. Ponsonby, that it was always proposed either *too soon* or *too late*.

† Several members of the established church, highly respected for their liberality and knowledge, are of a contrary opinion; witness the learned and reverend Prelate of Landaff, who has not scrupled, in the year 1803, to make the following open, manly, and Christian declaration: (Vide the Substance of a

Speech

Catholic emancipation as it is termed, would be a direct violation of the coronation oath. They were attended by large bodies of freebooters : the ferocious Orange-men were eager to offer their services, in which they might revel in their lust for traducing, reviling, and oppressing their Catholic countrymen. On the other hand, the public

Speech intended to have been spoken in the House of Lords, p. 27.) " We think the Catholics to be in error : they think " the same of us : both ought to reflect that every error is not " a criminal error ; and that their error is the greatest, who " most err against Christian charity. If any one should contend, that this is not the time for Government to make concessions to Ireland, I wish him to consider, whether there " is any time, in which it is improper for either individuals " or nations to do justice, any season improper for extinguishing " animosity, any occasion more suitable than the present for " putting an end to heart-burnings and internal discontent. I " should be as averse as any man from making concessions to " an enemy invading the country : but I would do much to " gain a cordial friend to assist me in driving him back ; " and such a friend, I am confident, Ireland would become."

A like spirit of liberality and moderation must have inspired the breast of the Primate of the British hierarchy, when he modelled the form of prayer, in which the nation last year invoked the Divine protection and blessing on the solemn fast-day : " Give us all grace to put away from us all rancour " of religious dissention, that they who agree in the essentials " of our most holy faith, and look for pardon through the " merits and intercession of the Saviour, may, notwithstanding their differences upon points of doubtful opinion, and " in the forms of external worship, still be united in the bonds " of Christian charity, and fulfil thy blessed Son's commandment, of loving one another as he hath loved them."

lic beheld the unusual phenomenon of the great political rivals, with their respective friends and adherents, maintaining the imperious necessity of the measure, and denying that the free will of the executive can in any possible case be constitutionally fettered from assenting to whatever bill the Lords and Commons in Parliament assembled may advise; that the coronation oath, by its words and spirit, enjoins the observance of existing laws; and the constitution leaves them essentially open to repeal and modification, according to the exigencies of times and circumstances. It is at this moment an awful consideration to a reflecting mind, that upon the liberty and welfare of four millions of his Majesty's subjects, inhabiting the most vulnerable part of the British empire, the whole body politic is drawn out in full array, every one dreading the word of command. In this unaccountable suspense, fear, or stupor, the passive victims are silent and quiet—*plectuntur Achivi*. The most lamentable effect of this perilous state of things, is, that the straggling corps of freebooters and marauders, presuming on their commissions, which recognise them as an irregular part of the general force, are permitted and encouraged to commence a masked warfare. They are let loose unmuzzled, fresh trained to the old game, without badge, name, or responsibility.

The

The war-hoop of defamation, slander, and opposition has long been given. Every engine has been put in requisition, that can be commanded to spread again wide and deep the baneful spirit of *religious* discord. As if Ireland, poor ill-fated Ireland, had not yet been saturated with blood and wretchedness! As if Great Britain feared that union should expel the dæmon of dissention, and diffuse indiscriminate concord through that long-distracted country, the Government papers in England are fed from Ireland with the foulest calumnies and falsehoods. The nauseous cant of bigotted mendacity is largely administered, as a provocative to stimulate the wasting lust for religious persecution. They are the unadministered doses, with which Ireland has been overgorged, sent under Drogheda covers to take their fate upon such British patients as shall madly swallow them. Such anonymous discharges of rancorous falsehoods, even in the supposed pay of Government *, would produce but slight effects upon the

I

impartial

The *Times* being the official Government paper, has with certain persons the authority of a British *Moniteur*. This paper, for the 5th January 1804, in a letter signed *Molyneux*, sets out in telling us that, "the disaffection and turbulence which have disgraced Ireland for above twenty years, have arisen from a radical ignorance in the English Government, of its real state." This is a prelude to a second letter of the same
hireling,

impartial public, were they left to operate by their mere intrinsic virtue. If in spite of St. Patrick's wand, there still be found some envenomed reptiles in the holy island, the dunghills in which their baneful eggs are hatched, may be easily traced to *Merrion Avenue*, or the vicinity of Lismore. The venomous issue may be followed home through all their windings, forms, and craft, to the parent vipers. These poisonous nondescripts have, however, the peculiarity of being innoxious to all but to their kindred spawn.

The author has already endeavoured to convince his reader of the real and true grounds upon which he proposed, and the Minister acceded to his writing a History of Ireland. Yet, ere he quits the subject, he submits to the public this written declaration, which he made to Mr.

Addington,

hireling, in *The Times* of the 9th January, in which he himself says, that the author's "*voluminous work is a gross libel on the conduct of the British Government!*" From *Molyneux's* commendation of the *British Critic*, it may be inferred, that those valuable and well-founded invectives have been made up in the gross by the same hand; to which also may be attributed some other such potions sent forth in the *Traveller*, for the benefit of his British country customers: in which may be read this description of all his Catholic countrymen: whose *wants and wishes are*, says he, *to exterminate all loyal subjects from Ireland, to seize their property, to separate it for ever from England, and to appropriate it exclusively to themselves: and this object they have invariably pursued ever since the Reformation was introduced into Ireland.* Such are these Doctors' *Union pills*.

Addington, in a letter of the 26th, of July 1803, which was never honoured with an answer.

“ SIR, *Essex-Street, 26th July 1803.*

“ I am sorry to find, from a conversation
 “ with Mr. Wickham, that the long and painful
 “ labours I have undergone to promote union
 “ and affection in the sister kingdom, have in
 “ some shape failed of the desired effect; and
 “ that it is found impracticable to give public
 “ countenance to the circulation of my History.
 “ I lament, that the same object can be seen in
 “ such opposite lights. I appeal, Sir, to your
 “ candour, whether the express conditions, under
 “ which I took the work in hand were not, to
 “ write an authentic, impartial, and true History
 “ of Ireland, to counteract the effects of Sir
 “ Richard Musgrave’s falsities and calumnies, to
 “ render the union popular, and follow up and
 “ support the spirit of Lord Cornwallis’s admi-
 “ nistration. To effect this, it became essentially
 “ necessary to decry that system, which Lord
 “ Cornwallis so pointedly reprobated; nor could
 “ those persons be consistently praised or pal-
 “ liated, against whom he had either expressed
 “ or shewn displeasure, or offence. I have
 “ laboured incessantly and zealously to inculcate,
 “ on every occasion, gratitude to his most gra-
 “ cious Majesty for the many signal favours con-

“ferred upon the Irish Catholics during his
 “reign; to display the advantages of union in
 “the most fascinating colours, and to convince
 “the people of that country, that it is the inten-
 “tion of the present Government to tread in the
 “footsteps of Lord Cornwallis, and not in those
 “of his predecessor. I have necessarily thrown
 “the odium of certain measures upon a junto in
 “Ireland, whose monopoly of power I neither
 “did or do conceive the present Government
 “wishes to revive or support. I have laboured
 “all I could to purify the British Government in
 “the eyes of the Irish nation, and to make them
 “sensible of the advantages of the union from
 “the innate and unvarying corruption of their
 “own Parliament,” &c. Such were the senti-
 ments of the author, not obliquely hinted at,
 ambiguously assumed, or obscurely stated, but
 explicitly urged both before and after publication,
 perhaps *ad nauseam*. Great then was his surprise,
 when he observed the mind of the Minister ob-
 stinately bent upon inverting, counteracting, and
 undervaluing the measures of Lord Cornwallis’s
 administration; greater, when he passed in review
 the long procession of characters implicated in,
 dependant upon, or interested in the continu-
 ance of the present system of government in
 Ireland, who now fill high offices in the state,
 and

and command an influence upon his Majesty's councils: all combining to revive, extend, and give permanency to the Machiavelian principle, so fatal to Ireland, *divide et impera*. The author undertakes not to combat these principles. He pretends not to lay, but to expose to view the *Orange* spirit, which lies a deadly *incubus* upon the present Ministry of the country. If Ireland, after the union, be not emancipated, fitting it is, that the Irish should know the men * and the measures,

* The irritation and virulence of the British Critic, and other anonymous writers, who are stimulated and hired to disgorge their venom at the *Historical Review*, shew, and it has become the author's duty to unfold, the conspiracy, formed not merely against *Catholic emancipation*, but against the publication of *the truth* of Irish history. Her masked assassins indiscriminately plunge their envenomed steel in the breast of every votary to truth. *Tros Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine habetur*. Protestant, Catholic, churchman, layman, are equally included in their deadly warrant. The author has in his possession a letter, written within these two months, from the Rev. Mr. Gordon, whose faithful and impartial History of the Rebellion of 1798, is too well known to all, who make common cause with truth, to need commendation. They will rejoice to learn, that this diligent investigator and illustrious martyr to truth is employing his literary talents upon a more extended scale. "I am," says he, "engaged for some time past in a History of Ireland, from the earliest accounts to the present time, and hope that you will find that impartiality in it, which you have had the goodness to praise in my Account of the Rebellion; on account of which I have been, and am most maliciously and meanly persecuted, to the discredit of many professors of the Protestant religion."

measures that keep them out of this long-sighed-for land of promise.

In the front of their opponents stands conspicuously forward the Lord High Chancellor of Ireland, Baron Redesdale. The fierceness of his zeal bespeaks all the precipitancy and heat of a recent proselyte to the cause. What powerful potion has effected the stupendous change of a liberal English Solicitor-general into an austere Irish Chancellor, the reader may, the author cannot, discover. The public has now had before them a chain of polemical correspondence between that noble Lord and the Earl of Fingall, the first in rank of the body of Irish Catholics. The circumstance of Lord Hardwicke's desiring the Chancellor to put that Noble Earl into the commission of the peace, gave occasion to this extraordinary correspondence. When Sir John Mitford brought a bill into the British House of Commons, in favour of the English Catholics, he is presumed to have thoroughly considered, for he then expressed himself well pleased with the tenets, principles, and conduct of that body, which received great benefit under his act. The nation rejoiced: The Catholics were grateful. Local circumstances may occasion a difference in the actions and conduct of the Irish from those of the English Catholics: but all the tenets and principles

principles of the Roman Catholic church being common to all the members of it, whether resident in England or Ireland, his Lordship's objections to Catholic doctrine must have had the same force (if any force they have) against the English Catholics in 1790, and the Irish in 1803. Not a man, who had not read his hyperpolemical ebullition, could believe it possible, that the great arbiter of national equity, the prime adviser of his Majesty's councils, and keeper of his conscience, should descend to become the Æolus of polemical discord, in a nation still throbbing with the green wounds of religious rancour. Reason will not second the warmest wish to exculpate the Irish Chancellor from making charges he knew to be false and groundless. The act, of his own introduction, requires, from every English Catholic, both a declaration of his adherence in spirituals to the see of Rome and an oath of allegiance to a Protestant King. He did not then think them incompatible. The Legislature does not now think them incompatible. The author knows not to what account to place the confusion of the terms *defection from the see of Rome, rebellion, and allegiance*, in the following sentence of his first letter. " Until the priests of
 " the Roman Catholic persuasion shall cease to
 " inculcate, that all who differ from them in
 " religious

“ religious opinions are to be considered as
 “ guilty of defection from the see of Rome, that
 “ is, as guilty of rebellion, including his Majesty’s
 “ sacred person in that description, it cannot
 “ be expected, that vulgar men should think
 “ themselves bound by any tie of allegiance to a
 “ King, thus represented to them, as himself
 “ guilty of a breach of what is termed a higher
 “ duty of allegiance.” The most uninformed
 parish priest throughout the four provinces of
 Ireland would have blushed thus to abuse the
 terms and confound the duties of the subject
 and the Christian.

Who would suppose that these sentiments were
 written by the dispenser of that church in Ireland,
 which, by their ninth and eleventh canon, deals
 out excommunication *ipso facto*, upon all those,
 who shall hereafter separate themselves from the
 communion of saints, as it is approved by the
 apostle’s rule *in the church of England*, and com-
 bine themselves *in a new brotherhood*, &c. and
 those, who affirm and maintain that any other
 assembly or congregation of the King’s subjects,
than those of the church of England, may rightly
 challenge to themselves the name of true and
 lawful churches, &c. Is he to be presumed igno-
 rant of the tenet of exclusive salvation so strongly
 asserted in the Athanasian creed, and the eighteenth
 of

of the thirty-nine articles of religion, to which every clergyman must subscribe ere he can enjoy any of his Lordship's benefices? No religion can be inculcated to man, but upon the score of truth: and truth is one. The Irish Catholics have been uninterruptedly loyal *de facto* to Protestant princes since the Revolution in 1668: but this zealous champion would now argue them out of the very possibility of their loyalty for want of brotherhood in Christ with a Protestant prince. Does his Lordship recollect that Dissenters (though by the canons of his church an *excommunicated brotherhood*) are loyal to King George, who is of the established church of England, and that the Protestants of the same established church were loyal to King William, a Presbyterian? When this polemic Chancellor complained *that Dr. Troy, in his Pastoral Instructions on the Duties of Christian Citizens, holds up high the exclusive doctrine*, did he reflect whether he had himself, or how many of his most confidential friends had ever subscribed, professed, assented, or sworn to these words, *This is the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved?* But slight reflection on the doctrine of his own church, would have made the noble Lord more cautious in charging the Catholics, on account of this very doctrine, *with the impossibility of ever being dutiful and loyal subjects of a King thus held*

out to them as himself a rebel. What degree of ignorance, however gross, can justify this indecorous abuse of the word *rebel*? The annexation of it to the person of his Majesty revolts against every principle of affection and loyalty. Little indeed are the expectation or desire of promoting those necessary civil duties, amongst his Majesty's subjects of Ireland, discoverable in the following sentiments of this evangelizing statist: "Under
 " such circumstances, it cannot be believed that
 " any honest and conscientious means have or
 " will be taken by the priests of the Romish persuasion to make the lower orders of the people,
 " composing their congregations, loyal subjects
 " of the Protestant Government of this country." And he strongly expresses his opinion, that Catholic doctrine *is repugnant to the repose of mankind.* This Noble Peer has not deigned in all his zeal to account for his pacificating mission. *How shall they preach except they be sent?* (Rom. x. 15.) He will not, however, renounce the commendation of his evangelical labours. *How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

The author has given these few extracts from Lord Redesdale's letter to shew to the public the new bent of his Lordship's mind towards the bulk of the Irish nation, and what eagerness to gain and secure their affections to the British government,

vernment, now animates the Noble Keeper of his Majesty's conscience in Ireland. However ill-judged (it is impossible to presume ill-intended) the exacerbation of past horrors may prove, it must all be laid to the account of *conscience*. That wide-expanded title admits under it an incalculable variety of articles. The fourth letter of this singular correspondence, however, contains an item that the most pliant ingenuity will scarcely force into the account of *conscientious convictions*. It relates to the case of the Rev. Mr. O'Neil, a Roman Catholic parish priest, lately returned from New South Wales. His Lordship complains, "that a priest, proved to have been guilty
 " of sanctioning the murders of 1798, trans-
 " ported to Botany Bay, and since pardoned by
 " the mercy of Government, has been brought
 " back in triumph, and by the same superior, to
 " what in defiance of the law he calls *his parish* ;
 " and there placed as a martyr, in a manner the
 " most insulting to the feelings of the Protest-
 " ants, to the justice of the country, and to that
 " Government to whose lenity he owes his re-
 " demption from the punishment due *to his crimes*." The Irish public has long known, and the British public now knows, what the Chancellor ought to have known ere he committed such acrimonious errors to paper, namely, that Mr. O'Neil never was found guilty of any crime, and consequently,

that he could not have been pardoned : that he was flogged, even to evisceration, for the purpose of extorting from him the secrets of the confessional ; that he was sent out to Botany Bay against the express order of Lord Cornwallis ; that he was called home by Lord Hardwicke, because he was an innocent man ; and that, for the same reason, was he reinstated in his parish by his superior. A lamentable proof of the revival of the old system of encouraging and acting upon false reports ! It had surely been wise, if Lord Chancellor Redesdale, like the great and humane Cornwallis, had checked this pernicious and wicked system, which so efficaciously stimulated the rebellion of 1798.

The doctrine of denying not only *actual* but *possible* loyalty to the body of Irish Catholics was imported by some unaccountable means into this country. To the astonishment of the British nation, his Majesty's Attorney-general (the brother-in-law of the Irish Chancellor) *volunteered* in the Imperial House of Commons, with reference to the Irish question, the following declaration :
 “ That the House should be deeply impressed
 “ with the expediency of guarding against the
 “ danger of alienating one part of the community,
 “ whose affections they were sure of, in attempt-
 “ ing to conciliate another part, *they knew they*
 “ *never could possess.*” (*Report of Parliamentary*
Debate)

Debate in Morning Post, August 12, 1803.) Little could such language tend to conciliate the affections of his Majesty's Protestant and Catholic subjects of Ireland.

It is matter of notoriety, that at this hour out of 110,000 seamen of the British navy, full 70,000 are Irish, and most of them Roman Catholics; and few are aware of the large proportion of his Majesty's army composed of the same description of persons. The affections of such a prolific nursery for the public service, is not a matter of indifference to the welfare of the empire. Whenever the question of their emancipation shall be brought forward, it will remain to be seen, what part will be taken in it by those gentlemen in particular now in office, who have had the opportunity of practically knowing the effects of the various systems produced by the several administrations in Ireland, with which they have been connected, or on which they have depended, or do depend.

The same earnestness, which actuated the author in investigating and disclosing as much of the truth of Irish history as he could come at, induced him to submit the manuscript of this *Postliminious* Preface to the Minister, that he might render it in every shape unexceptionable in point of veracity. He accordingly had the honour of laying before him the manuscript, accompanied by the following letter.

SIR,

SIR,

Essex Street, Feb. 2, 1804.

When I was honoured with an interview on the 28th of September last, you assured me, that you lamented not having acceded to my offer of submitting the manuscript of my History to some perusal on your behalf. From the circumstances of that History's having given you both displeasure and offence, although you had not read one line of it, as you avowed to me on that same day, and from a most extraordinary, though not unaccountable tenacity in Mr. Egerton, my bookseller, in checking the sale of the work, I have found myself necessitated, in justice to my reputation, to my family, and to the Irish nation, whom your conduct affects more than the writer of their history, to publish a Postliminious Preface. Inasmuch, therefore, as that will form a part of the work which I wrote with your approbation, and in the strictest conformity with the spirit and tenor of my proposals expressed to you, both by word and writing, it is but consistent with the honesty, honour, and candour, which have guided my whole conduct towards you, to afford you an opportunity of perusing this part of the work in manuscript before the sheets are drawn off, pledging myself to correct any misstatement of fact, that your memory or knowledge may enable you to rectify before publication, and in which I may have erred. As an historian, I am little anxious
about

about form and style ; I wish to be clear and explicit in detail, simple and correct in language. As to historical truth, I am inexorable ; I may be deceived myself, but whilst I possess my reason I never shall be brought to lend a hand in deceiving others. If before Monday you shall have pointed out to me no false or erroneous statements in the manuscript now left for your perusal, I shall conclude that it is in every point of view what I intended it should be, a true and faithful account of my writing the Historical Review of the State of Ireland. After the fate of that work, the interest and welfare of Ireland, and the consequent firmness of the British empire, call for the publication of such an account. I have the honour to be, with most profound deference and respect,

Sir, your devoted and obedient

Humble servant,

FRANCIS PLOWDEN.

Right Hon. Henry Addington.

On the ensuing Sunday the author was honoured with the following answer :

Downing Street, Feb. 5, 1804.

Mr. Addington has received Mr. Plowden's letter and the manuscript which accompanied it ; Mr. Addington abstains from suggesting any alteration in the latter, but cannot forbear remarking its extreme inaccuracy, as far as it relates to communications,

munications, that have taken place between Mr. Plowden and himself.

The reader will perhaps agree with the author, that after the receipt of this answer further application to the Premier, for the purpose of revisal and correction, would have been obtrusive and fruitless. The answer, however, admits the truth of the whole Preface, except such parts of it as relate to the communications, which have taken place between that Right Honourable Gentleman and the author. As he remarks the *extreme inaccuracy* of the statement of those communications, without condescending to point out in what it consists, the author is at a dead fault to know what parts to alter or correct. For he is free to say, that after a most rigorous revisal of the manuscript, and impartial reflection upon his communications with the Minister, he is ready to do, with respect to the Preface, what he once told the Minister (he now repeats it) with reference to his History; he is ready to swear, that no part whatever of this statement is false, or substantially inaccurate.

THE END.



